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ABSTRACT

This report is a case study of Northampton County Area Community College (NCACC) for the period 1972-74, as it attempted to cope with problems posed by the interruption of its growth while remaining a strong and viable college. The report contains five chapters. The first chapter, in addition to describing the nature of the problem, provides a brief history of the first five years of the college, and describes the initial steps taken to mobilize institutional resources to seek a solution. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 deal with the specific actions taken by NCACC to deal with the problems identified. In the final chapter, college planning for the remainder of the decade, based on the experiences of the past 2 years, is defined. (Author/DB)

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NORTHAMPTON COUNTY AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ADJUSTS

TO THE SEVENTIES

A Case Study

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FOREWARD

The role of regional accrediting in the life of an institution has been the focus of supporters and critics alike. There are those who maintain the system in America providing for peer appraisal through voluntary accrediting associations guarantees diversity of educational delivery systems while maintaining standards and quality control. It is argued that our postsecondary education systems, unencumbered by any national Ministry of Education structure as existent in many European and Asian countries, have the capacity to be flexible and responsive to change and the resultant needs of society.

Critics of institutional accreditation argue the bureaucratic shortcomings of any Ministry structure are inherent in the accrediting organizations as well. Charges that accreditation agencies are slow and prone to inflexibility are heard as well as the claim that the very nature of accreditation forces remnants of uniformity and commonality upon institutions.

As part of this series of monographs produced by the Center, this case study report has been published for the purpose of assisting state and regional agencies as well as individual institutions. The case study approach to reaffirmation in the accrediting process utilized by the Middle States Association is testimony to the constructive efforts of regional accreditation to explore avenues which can benefit the individual institution while achieving the outcomes for which accreditation was adopted by the educational institutions of our nation. The case study approach is beneficial to the institution involved by providing it with an opportunity to examine where it has been and where it is going as well as what must be done in order for it to get there. For participants of the case study visit to the institution, an opportunity for a seminar-type experience is available to examine thoroughly every facet of the institution in the same manner an accreditation team would during the two and one-half days of visitation. The Middle States case study design provides for an outside director qualified to chair visiting committees who interacts with the participants as well as the representatives of the institution itself. Two observers, representing the regional association, submit a written report after the case study visit for use by the Middle States Association.

The case study report of the Northampton County Area Community College should be of interest to state and regional officials as well as to college administrators and faculty members. The NCACC story is not only well written, but is frank and open. Dr. Richard C. Richardson, Jr., President of the institution, reveals his philosophy and approach to leadership for the institution. Candid acknowledgement of unsuccessful

efforts as well as those which were successful make the report valuable for the reader to examine strategies and approaches which might be used in other institutions and settings as well.

This monograph has been produced as part of the activities of the Florida State University/University of Florida Center for State and Regional Leadership, supported in part by a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The Center is committed to the pre-service and in-service training of professionals who serve in state and regional agencies. It is also committed to the study of issues and problems which confront these agencies and their constituent institutions.

We are indebted to Dr. Richard C. Richardson, Jr. and the Northampton County Area Community College Board of Trustees for enabling us to use their case study report. We also acknowledge the assistance of Dr. James L. Wattenbarger, Director of the Institute of Higher Education at The University of Florida, in publishing the series of monographs by the FSU/UF Center for State and Regional Leadership.

Louis W. Bender
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CHAPTER 1

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

During the decade of the sixties nearly four hundred new public two year colleges were founded and enrollment in such institutions almost quadrupled from more than a half million in 1960 to more than two million in 1969. Northampton County Area Community College enrolled its first class during this decade in 1967. By the fall of 1971, enrollment had grown to almost three thousand full and part time students, paralleling the experience of most community colleges during this period. Suddenly, and with little advance warning, a growth rate which averaged about sixty percent for the first four years turned into an enrollment decline of nearly five percent.

As a result, in the fall of 1972, NCACC faced the kind of challenge that has become increasingly common in the seventies for community colleges founded during the sixties with their promise of growth, everlasting. The problems fell into two categories. The first involved the immediate steps required to maintain financial solvency. The second related to obtaining answers about why enrollment had declined and more important, what could be done about it.

The 1972-73 year also brought discussions with the Middle States Association about renewal of accreditation due in 1974-75. One of the innovative options for reaccreditation offered by Middle States is the Case Study, an arrangement whereby a college may offer itself as a laboratory for a seminar in higher education. Under

this arrangement, three observers are attached to the Case Study to review accreditation without the requirement for preparation of a special comprehensive self-study or the visit of a full evaluation team. The institution selected for the Case Study prepares a series of reports on activities which are most central to its priorities and concerns and these reports serve as the background reading for the seminar.

This report is a Case Study of NCACC for the period 1972-74 as it struggled to cope with the problems posed by the interruption of its growth while remaining a strong and viable college. The reason for preparing this report, in addition to the need to satisfy Middle States requirements is to share with other community colleges the unvarnished account of these two years in the hope that our experiences both good and bad may assist them in dealing with similar issues. To this end Dr. Louis Bender, Director, State and Regional Higher Education Center, Florida State University, made arrangements for publication as one of the Center documents.

The report is divided into five chapters. The first, in addition to describing the nature of the problem includes a brief history of the first five years of the college and describes the initial steps taken to mobilize institutional resources to seek a solution. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 deal with the specific actions taken by NCACC to deal with the problems identified. The criteria for including a specific response in this report are either the action was tried and did make a difference, or an action was tried and failed to achieve the expected results. No attempt has been made to describe those

aspects of the college which have remained essentially unchanged during the two year period. In the final chapter, college planning for the remainder of the decade based on the experiences of the past two years is defined.

A Brief History of the College

On April 24, 1965, the Northampton County School Directors, assembled in annual convention, officially dedicated themselves to the "establishment of a community college program which ensures maximum offerings for all those...who would and should receive the benefits of a comprehensive community college program." Fourteen months later, the concept became reality with the organization and initial meeting of the charter members of the Board of Trustees on June 27, 1966.

In Pennsylvania, the operation of community colleges is governed by the Community College Act of 1963 which establishes fiscal responsibility and legal structure. Operating costs are shared equally by the Commonwealth, the local sponsor and the student. Capital costs are divided between the Commonwealth and the local sponsor. The local sponsor which may be either county commissioners or a collectivity of school districts, is the taxing authority appointing the college trustees and approving the annual budget. Relationships between the local sponsor and the college trustees are governed by articles of agreement which assume great importance because they define the rights and responsibilities of both parties and are legally enforceable in a court of law.

By 1 February 1967, the trustees of NCACC had selected a site and appointed a president. They were ready to turn their attention to the articles of agreement. Several characteristics of these articles deserve mention because they have contributed so significantly to the subsequent development of the college. First, a decision was made to include the bond counsel in the drafting of the articles. As a consequence, when the bond issue for site acquisition and campus construction was authorized, the legal basis of the college was not open to question. Second, the articles were carefully written to preserve a balance of power between the local sponsors and the trustees. In this way the possibility of either becoming involved in the prerogatives of the other was minimized. Third, for the first and only time to date in Pennsylvania community college history, the articles contained a complete plan and legal commitment for construction of the permanent campus. Finally, rapid action on the articles by the local sponsors was encouraged by tying their approval to a plan to construct an interim campus and open classes on October 2, 1967.

With this inducement, the articles of agreement including a capital commitment of 10.3 million were endorsed without dissenting vote by the thirteen sponsoring school districts within thirty days of their submission.

There is a great deal of work involved in starting a community college but during the sixties it was common for such work to be accomplished in even shorter time spans than the eight month

schedule established by the trustees of NCACC. The unusual part of the plan involved the design, construction and furnishing of an interim campus in a period of eight months, an approach which had not previously been tried in Pennsylvania. Area newspapers expressed the conviction of most local citizens that it was a bold plan but one that was impossible to achieve in the time allotted. Due to an improbable convergence of sympathetic state and local officials, committed contractors, favorable weather, and a staff able to get by on limited amounts of sleep, the campus was at least rendered suitable for joint occupancy with the contractor, and classes began on time. This first dramatic achievement marked the beginning of an unusually effective relationship between the college and its community.

Northampton County is situated on the east central boundary of Pennsylvania along the Delaware River some eighty miles west of New York City and seventy-five miles north of Philadelphia. Part of the Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton standard metropolitan area, the third largest in Pennsylvania, the county resembles a triangle standing on its point. In the southern third are the cities of Bethlehem and Easton as well as the bulk of the slightly less than quarter million people served by the college district. Business and industrial activities are characterized by great diversity in both manufacturing and non-manufacturing categories and include metal fabrication, apparel manufacture, transportation and utilities, the quarrying of slate and manufacture of cement, retail trade and

service industries. The Lehigh Valley is noted for its beauty. Its strategic location between the heavily populated eastern corridor and the recreation areas of the Poconos have served to attract six private colleges and universities and a branch of the state university. Within forty-five minutes driving time are two state colleges. With this wealth of educational resources, an early question which the college had to address was that of need. To further complicate this issue, many citizens felt there should have been a single college for the entire Lehigh Valley rather than the two which developed in Lehigh County and Northampton County simultaneously due primarily to local pride and the inability of the two counties to come to a common agreement.

The question of need was quickly resolved when the 550 full time equivalent students served in 1967 nearly doubled to 1084 in 1968 and then doubled again reaching 2240 in 1971. The head count growth was equally impressive soaring from 850 the first fall to more than 2800 in the fall of 1971. Program development paralleled enrollment growth. In the fall of 1967, eight career programs were initiated. Two of these were later dropped. A college parallel program with multiple options, a strong developmental program and evening offerings which in the first year enrolled more students than day courses rounded out the instructional program. The college adopted comprehensiveness as an immediate priority because the community image of the institution was still unshaped and would be strongly conditioned by early experiences.

The 1971-72 College Catalog lists sixteen career programs, several with multiple options. Four of these programs were available only in the evenings and four others were available in five year evening options. Evening sequences were also available for all of the transfer options and for the developmental program. Staff growth kept pace with new offerings growing from the charter professional staff of 21 to a total of 105 with an additional 53 holding part time status.

Thanks in no small measure to the capital outlay provisions of the articles of agreement, campus development also proceeded with only the normal problems associated with a building program. Prior to occupancy of the interim campus in August, 1967, the Board chose the national firm of Caudill Rowlett Scott of Houston, Texas to master plan and design the permanent campus. Ground was broken for the first five-building complex in early 1970 after a series of delays resulting, first, from the approval process involved in qualifying for a one million dollar federal grant and later from a cost overrun on the initial bids necessitating reductions in the scope of the project and rebidding. The following year three additional buildings were placed under construction. By the fall of 1972 the college had either occupied, was preparing to occupy or had placed under construction a total of ten buildings constituting a ten million dollar megastructure encompassing over 240,000 gross square feet. An additional 30,000 square feet was available through continuing use of the interim campus. The facilities were

as comprehensive as the program with strong emphasis on spaces which would lend themselves to community use as well as serve the needs of credit students. Included among such areas were a gymnasium, 325 seat theater, a library, 125 seat classroom in the round, termed a kiva, food service, and ample parking. The focus of the campus was on joint use facilities and planned interaction. No separate areas other than offices were reserved for staff use. An attractive cafeteria formed the hub of traffic patterns serving as the "town square". Activities and recreational programs and facilities were emphasized as a way of strengthening student identification with the college.

The decision to emphasize relationships with the community was reflected in a number of ways besides emphasis in campus design. The computer center operated more than two shifts six days a week scheduling students in a three county area, handling budgets and billings for non-profit community organizations and serving in other ways the data processing needs of a wide range of educational, charitable, planning and service community organizations. A dental hygiene clinic offered low cost or free dental services. An extremely liberal facilities use policy invited the community into the college--and the community came. The college's record of achievement, its strong community service effort and the reactions of its students combined to make the position of the institution within the communities it served extremely strong by the fall of 1971, even for institutions of its type. This is evidenced in

part by the response of area school boards in approving without exception the total budget requests of the college for the entire period. During its history, only one school board failed to approve the budget one year. That board did not vote against the budget, it withheld action. After a visit from trustees and college administrators, it was the first board to adopt the budget the following year.

There are many additional developments of the five year period which might be mentioned in a history less brief. Significant innovation in instruction based on faculty leadership, a governance system for faculty and students with open communication with trustees leading to a faculty decision not to organize for collective bargaining, an attrition rate phenomenally low by community college standards, student life and faculty availability creating a strong sense of identity with the institution for students, more than three hundred citizens serving on college committees, councils or foundation boards; all of these bear testimony to the real progress of the college and the sense of satisfaction shared by those associated with its development. Prior to the fall of 1972, the college community was characterized by a firm conviction that the future was secure and could be reached safely by a continuing practice of the techniques that had proven themselves during the first five years.

Analysis of the Problem

In the fall of 1972, without any decline in the number of graduating high school seniors in Northampton County, NCACC experienced a decline of 11% in its full time equivalent enrollment. Because the college had projected an increase, the total difference between projections and enrollment numbered 200. College finances in Pennsylvania are based on actual enrollment. Budgets are built on projected enrollments. The difference between actual enrollment and projected enrollment in the fall of 1972 translated into a potential loss in operating revenues of $240,000. Even with the existence of a contingency reserve of $207,000, the situation was serious.

The enrollment decline was selective in nature. It occurred almost exclusively in liberal arts, education and engineering related programs. Further, the problem was as much one of retention as recruitment. While there was a reduction in the number of entering freshmen, the greatest loss was among returning sophomores where attrition rates increased from 30% to almost 50%. At the same time, pressure for admission to most career programs increased.

Conversations with community college administrators in other states soon made it clear that the phenomenon was by no means confined to Northampton County. A decision was reached to present as much information as possible about the problem to the staff members of the college and to seek their assistance in developing solutions. This approach was in marked contrast to the direction

chosen by many institutions in which faculty were kept in the dark as long as possible to avoid creating anxiety. Accordingly, a position paper was drafted and distributed to all faculty and administrators in September of 1972. The paper presented available information, identified possible responses, discussed strengths and weaknesses of various approaches, suggested some directions for early attention, outlined action that had been initiated to reduce costs and presented a call for action. Subsequently, a general meeting of the professional staff was called at which the proposals, many of which were controversial, precipitated heated debate.

In retrospect, the major function served by the paper was to alert the entire institution to the existence of a serious problem. Some of the major recommendations of the paper either did not find a receptive audience or proved incorrect. The most constructive action the college took to deal with the situation was not mentioned at all in the paper and was not identified until the following spring. Suggestions for the creation of special committees proved unnecessary because a sound governance structure already in place proved better suited to dealing with the problems.

This report constitutes a description of the actions taken by a staff mobilized to attack a broad range of issues in such areas as admissions and recruitment, cost reduction, college environment, curriculum reform and instructional innovation. Two years later the college appears to be well on the way to a satisfactory adjustment to the seventies not so much because of the one or two steps taken

which produced major change as a consequence of the cumulative impact of many small changes and contributions from a variety of sources. The turn-about has been dramatic.

It is difficult to determine how much of the improved circumstances should be attributed to actions taken by the staff and how much to a combination of complex factors fully understood by no one at the present time. In some instances such as growth of non-credit enrollments, the cause and effect relationships are direct and obvious. In other areas such as reduced attrition, cause and effect is much more subtle. We can only describe and interpret to the limits of our data and experience. From there the reader must take responsibility for translating the information into implications for his own institution.

CHAPTER 2

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The most obvious area for examination in an enrollment decline is admissions and recruiting. It was apparent that this area needed our attention, but equally apparent that improved recruiting could not solve our problem. Since we knew the enrollment decline was general for most institutions of higher education it was logical to assume that most institutions would respond by stepping up their recruiting and by reducing admission standards where appropriate. This proved to be the case. Admissions and recruiting became important, not as the answer to our problem, but rather as a way of keeping it from getting any worse.

For the solution we needed to look to career programs where student interest had increased and to new student markets. More students were selecting area vocational-technical schools in preference to traditional academic programs. What were the implications for NCACC? Many different groups of adult learners had demonstrated interest in some college programs. What was the potential of the adult learner and how could this group be served most effectively? We had many questions and few answers but we were persuaded that there was no single answer. Our best approach lay in giving attention to as many of the alternatives as our resources would permit, allowing results rather than predictions to guide our future actions.

Admissions

During the summer of 1972 enrollment statistics showed a slight decrease in the number of applicants. This decrease caused only slight alarm because there appeared to be a larger than normal percent of applicants who were actually registering. The full realization that the college would not reach its enrollment projections occurred only at the end of the registration period when 125 full-time preregistered students failed to complete their registrations. The admissions and records office immediately began contacting every preregistered student to determine the reasons for not attending.

As a result of these telephone calls, 25 full-time students completed their registration because of a decision to permit them, as well as any future registrants who could not afford to pay, the opportunity to defer their tuition. Most of these students were not eligible for college scholarships or grants. In addition, the late registration period was extended for a week and the late registration fee was waived.

With the completion of registration for the fall of 1972 the admissions office began the formulation of a master plan for recruiting involving a series of proposed activities by the admissions personnel and NCACC faculty. The professional staff in the admissions office in September, 1972, consisted of the Director of Admissions. This was increased in December, 1972, and again in January, 1974, to add two admissions assistants to staff an outreach

program bringing the admissions staff into the community. During 1972-73 the staff visited eight shopping malls, city fairs and banks. A permanent display was developed and all forms of college material were displayed and distributed.

To reach non-traditional students, a Spanish speaking admissions aide gave speeches to community groups, church groups, and frequented places where potential minority group students tended to congregate. In addition, he visited local high schools to discuss college offerings specifically with minority students. The admissions effort also involved extensive advertising directed toward groups such as veterans and women placed in the women's and sports sections of the newspapers.

Staff office hours were increased to include three nights and Saturday mornings. This arrangement has been particularly useful in serving part-time students whose work schedules are not compatible with normal office hours. To assist students from outside our immediate area a housing service was developed to provide lists of rooms and apartments available for rent to students. This list is continuously updated by an admissions aide. This service has also been useful in retaining currently enrolled students.

Faculty involvement in the recruiting of students was organized through the Recruitment Committee of the Faculty Association which has served as a coordinating board for ideas involving faculty. During the spring, 1973, high school visitations, at least one faculty member was invited to join admissions personnel in meeting

potential NCACC students. In addition, several faculty members contacted local high schools and invited interested students to visit the college.

Lists of all local high school faculty were distributed to interested college staff who were encouraged to contact their counterparts in the high schools. As a result, one college mathematics faculty member was invited to serve as a guest lecturer in all of the senior mathematics classes in one high school. Other faculty members are now involved in a similar program in a variety of disciplines.

The problem of recruiting students for a community college must be regarded as an institution-wide responsibility. It cannot be carried out effectively by one person or one office. From the fall of 1972 to fall, 1973, there was an increase of 210 students. The increase cannot be attributed to any single activity. Advertisements, contacts with college groups, outreach efforts and word of mouth all contribute to the decision of a given individual. Visits to banks where only ten people picked up literature in two days might well be eliminated. Overall, however, it is the comprehensiveness and quality of the total effort as well as the public image of the institution that determines the number of new students who seek admission.

Career Education Opportunities

Developing student interest in attending the college was only a part of the problem. In the fall of 1972 a serious mismatch existed

between the interests of students and the program slots offered by the college. One immediate response was the attempt to reduce the number of students being turned away from career programs by increasing the number of spaces available. A second section was added to double the enrollment in commercial art. Nursing was expanded. A power option was added to the electrical/electronics technology program. All career program coordinators were asked to review the possibilities of opening admissions to their programs to all who applied. This could not be done in the health services programs but a majority of the rest became open admissions. Attention was also given to the development of new career programs.

As the possibilities for new programs were explored, it became evident that if the goal was new students rather than the redistribution of the existing student pool, programs significantly different in the degree of emphasis on applied as opposed to theoretical considerations would need to be developed. Such programs as automotive technology, and heating and refrigeration technology were obviously high demand areas but they required special laboratories, were currently under the jurisdiction of the area vocational-technical schools, and would require cooperative action.

In July of 1972 the relationship among the executive officers of the community college and two area vocational-technical schools could be characterized best as one which involved equal amounts of indifference, lack of trust, and insensitivity to one another's problems. The first real movement toward cooperative relationships

began in that month with discussions of the feasibility of merging the two practical nursing programs offered at the vocational-technical schools and transferring them to the community college. These discussions opened the door to other areas of mutual concern, and a plan of action was formulated which would provide the framework of a cooperative approach to the solution of these problems.

In August, 1972, the directors of the vocational-technical schools and the president of the community college developed a position paper titled, "A Proposal for New Types of Cooperation," which had as its theme the desire to provide systematic, coordinated career education without unnecessary duplication. The paper recognized, in addition to the unique responsibilities for each type of institution, broad areas of mutual concern. Incorporated within the paper were these objectives:

1. Develop career education programs which incorporate the career lattice concept.
2. Improve the utilization of facilities.
3. Share faculty resources whenever possible.
4. Improve articulation between related programs at the vocational-technical schools and the community college.
5. Develop a plan for early admission of superior vocational students to the community college.
6. Involve the three institutions in joint planning of facility construction programs.

7. Plan manpower surveys jointly.

The administrators recognized that the achievement of these objectives required a coordinating mechanism which could bridge organizational differences to create the necessary level of interaction and ccoperation. They concluded that the need could best be met by a consortium arrangement among the three institutions. The consortium would be advisory in nature, would identify areas of mutual concern and would make recommendations for the delegation of responsibility for dealing with these areas. A consortium director, mutually agreeable to the directors and the president, would be appointed.

The proposal was received favorably by the joint operating committees of the two vocational-technical schools and the board of trustees of the community college. It served as the basis for submittal of a grant request under the Vocational Education Act Amendments of 1968. The grant was approved and funding authorized for a consortium director, clerical services and consulting assistance.

The director was selected and assumed full-time responsibilities as Coordinator of Career Program Planning in mid-March, 1973. An organizational structure comprised of the two vocational directors, the college president, and the coordinator was established and became known as the Career Education Cooperative. The Cooperative meets monthly to discuss progress, establish priorities and define objectives for recommendation to the boards of the respective institutions.

A Career Education Planning Council comprised of board representatives from the three institutions was organized to establish lines of communication between the Career Education Cooperative and the boards. The Council meets four times a year to review and react to proposals presented by the Career Education Cooperative, interpret the positions of their boards, inform the boards of new proposals and suggest areas of investigation for cooperative career programs.

One of the earliest accomplishments of the Career Education Cooperative was the transfer of the practical nursing programs from the vocational-technical schools to the community college where the programs share the nursing arts laboratory with the registered nursing program. Two laboratories in the vocational-technical schools were released and adapted to other instructional purposes, thus relieving secondary school enrollment pressures. Savings have been realized in terms of the number of administrative, clerical and teaching staff members required for the practical nursing program. Finally, the practical and registered nursing programs have been modified so that students will find it easier to move from one level to another.

The Career Education Cooperative initiated an automotive technology program in the 1973-74 academic year. The four automotive courses, totaling 14 semester hours of credit, attracted an average enrollment of 15 students per course. The program was designed to give training in automobile mechanic skills and to give preparation

for positions in automotive service and parts management. The program serves the needs of the graduates of the vocational-technical school automobile mechanics program, high school graduates who have had no previous automotive training, and individuals employed in the automotive field who wish to extend their technical skills or advance to management positions. The program is competency based and includes provisions for granting credit for competencies gained at the vocational-technical school or on the job. The college contracts with the area vocational-technical school to teach the laboratory courses and to provide the necessary facilities and supplies. A student may enroll full-time or part-time. He may take only those courses directly related to automobile mechanics and receive a certificate, or he may choose to take the automobile mechanics courses along with the related general education courses and qualify for an associate degree. The program is flexible, open-ended and represents the ultimate in secondary, post-secondary articulation.

Joint faculty committees from the three institutions involved in career programs in data processing, architectural technology and electrical/electronics technology have met during the current academic year to improve program articulation between the two levels of instruction. These committees have agreed to a plan for granting advanced credit in beginning courses at the college on the basis of vocational teacher recommendations. Thus, students will be able to continue their career studies without unnecessary repetition of work previously covered.

Agreements concluded by the articulation committees include provisions for meeting twice each year to evaluate current progress and to seek out ways in which articulation could be improved. The ultimate goal is to present to the community career education programs which span the secondary and postsecondary years and which are structured to facilitate movement from the vocational-technical school to the community college. The anticipated benefits are two-fold:

1. Community college career programs should attract more graduates of related vocational-technical programs.
2. Larger numbers of capable students should be attracted to the vocational-technical programs which are operating with articulation agreements.

Future program development by the Career Education Cooperative will emphasize evening programs designed to provide promotional opportunities for people employed full time. This population includes vocational-technical graduates as well as others who have received their training on the job.

On the basis of a survey of employers and employer organizations in the construction field, plans are underway to develop a program in Building Construction Management. Response from those polled was highly enthusiastic. Another survey conducted at the same time with firms engaged in heating, ventilating and refrigeration contracting elicited favorable response to a proposed program for upgrading men employed in the field. Program development for this area will begin immediately upon completion of the Building Construction Management Program.

At a recent meeting of the Career Education Cooperative it was agreed that the Coordinator of Career Program Planning should seek out training needs in business and industry which could be satisfied by the community college and the vocational-technical schools. Although both types of institution have responded to business and industry needs in the past, training has usually been given in response to a request made to the institution by the organization. An aggressive approach such as that proposed by the Cooperative will reach many businesses previously unaware of the existence of these services and should generate a significant part-time enrollment.

Combined with the emphasis on cooperative relationships with area vocational-technical schools and the expansion of opportunities in high demand programs has been the careful scrutiny of existing programs with low enrollments. One program, transportation and distribution management, has been terminated as having served the need it was established to meet. Another program, machine design technology, is currently being studied for conversion to a part-time evening option or outright termination. The resurgence of employment opportunities and student interest in engineering fields has suggested the need for some delay in reaching a final decision.

Services to Prisoners

As a result of discussions with prison officials and the State Department of Education it became apparent that inmates of correctional institutions represented one large pool of potential students with unmet needs. Two programs were developed. The first involved

a Para-Teacher Training Program at the Camp Hill State Correctional Institute near Harrisburg where 120 inmates of eight state correctional facilities were provided with instructional aide training to enable them to tutor fellow inmates in basic education skills in their home institutions. The program involves fifteen credit hours of work which can be applied to the associate degree and is taught by two faculty members on temporary appointment who have completed a special masters degree program in social restoration at Lehigh University. The program is totally funded by a grant from the Merrill Foundation and from State reimbursement. Through the College-at-Home Program described in Chapter 3, inmates will be able to continue their education in prison with the possibility of earning the associate degree in a number of fields.

The second program which is less well defined at the time this report is written involves the educational needs of prisoners at Northampton County Prison, a short term correctional institution for prisoners who are given sentences of two years or less. Some instruction has already been offered in math, but it is clear that the rapid turnover and the diverse backgrounds and needs of the prisoners will require an individualized approach offering career counseling, courses and possibly skill training. Because of the nature of the needs identified to date, the Career Program Cooperative will be the vehicle through which a plan will be devised so that the Eastern Northampton County Area Vocational-Technical School serves as a full partner in the process of meeting these needs.

Center for Adult Learning

During several months following the enrollment problems of the fall of 1972, career education was viewed as the most promising response to the need to attract more students. As a result, nine new career programs and options were identified for development and implementation by fall, 1973. Much time was devoted during the fall and winter to these programs. Of the nine, three had been planned as a part of the college's long range plan for the development of career programs. These three proved successful. Of the remaining six, two achieved some measure of success while the remaining four failed, testimony to the results of hasty planning and implementation.

As the months passed, information on student applications made it increasingly clear that the development of career education could make significant contributions to the long range resolution of enrollment problems but the development of such programs could not be accelerated sufficiently to make any major impact within one to three years. As a result the college turned its attention to the search for alternatives that might make an immediate impact, thus providing a breathing space during which program changes of longer range implications might be accomplished.

The needs of adults had been recognized since the founding of the college in a modest program of continuing education offering predominantly credit courses in the evenings and on Saturdays. Relatively little administrative attention had been given to this group partly as a result of the limited facilities available on the interim campus.

In the fall of 1972, however, the college had available a new major resource in the recently occupied permanent campus and the community had begun to respond to the college's interest in making facilities and programs available to as many area residents as possible.

The decision to study the needs of adults as one major direction of the college was followed by the decision to seek assistance from a consultant. Two approaches to planning a significant expansion of the program of continuing education were identified.

Under the traditional approach, college faculty and staff decide what students should have, offer the program and await a response. If courses are supported they become a part of the program; if not they are removed from the schedule. Little evaluation is performed to determine why some courses made and others did not. Under the community centered approach, college offerings are based on defined clientele needs, not on faculty and staff preferences. Faculty and staff productivity is increased since the results of planning produce a high degree of student support. Little time is wasted in planning courses and programs which are never offered.

In the development of the fall, 1973 continuing education program, a strong effort was made to use the community centered concept. The following groups participated in providing information: (a) senior citizens organizations, (b) business and industry, (c) Bureau of Corrections, (d) the Christian Associations (WMCA/YWCA), (e) the Agricultural Extension Service, (f) governmental agencies (police and fire), (g) professional societies, (h) unemployed housewives (unskilled), (i) working high school graduates or drop-outs who had

no postsecondary training or education, (j) currently employed individuals interested in new careers, (k) individuals who had been trained or educated in a career but had been away from it for a period of time and required refresher skills, (l) the general population interested in leisure time activities.

Active liaison with representatives from these groups helped staff to identify problem areas not previously considered in the continuing education program. Change had to occur before these groups could be served adequately. Some of the responses that had to be adopted included: (a) differential pricing requirements for courses, (b) flexible scheduling including a variety of starting times and course lengths, (c) easier registration including use of telephone and mail, (d) off-campus offerings, (e) differential compensation for faculty, (f) identification of adjunct faculty with special skills, (g) tuition waivers, and (k) requirements of special diets. In order to provide a distinctive identity for this plan to deliver services to a new population, the term Center for Adult Learning was chosen.

The need for flexible scheduling emerged early in working with community organizations. The college organized three fall semesters each with a separate beginning and termination date. The regular fall semester started in late August and followed a 15 week sequence, terminating before the Christmas holidays. The late fall semester began the third week of September and offered courses which continued through the third week in January, observing the usual Christmas break. Finally, an extended fall semester was offered during the first

three weeks in January providing for concentrated study in selected areas. In all cases, these schedules were arranged so that time would permit the offering of regular credit courses. In addition, non-credit courses, workshops and conferences of varying lengths started and concluded throughout the period. Both the credit and non-credit offerings were available day, evening, late afternoon and Saturday mornings. Evaluations done on all three calendars revealed both faculty and student support for their continuation. The result of these various options was to broaden the number and types of students that could be reached, yielding a significant increase in full-time equivalent student enrollment. For example, 85 FTE students were enrolled in the January term alone, an enrollment that could not have been generated without this session.

In working with business, industrial and professional groups it became evident that many had highly sophisticated educational programs of their own. Care had to be exercised to ensure that unnecessary duplication of service was avoided. Some groups were interested in de-emphasizing or discontinuing the delivery of educational services to their employees or membership. Having experienced an increase in cost in offering such programs, the prospect of having an educational institution handle their educational requirements appealed to them. Because these groups hesitated to abandon totally their own educational enterprise, arrangements were made in some instances for co-sponsorship. Under this arrangement the college provided classroom space and use of related college

facilities, while the cooperating agency engaged the instructor and compensated him. College credit is not given at the present time for co-sponsored courses. Examples of co-sponsoring agencies include the U.S. Coast Guard, the insurance and newspaper industry, the American Institute of Industrial Engineers and the Industrial Management Clubs of two communities.

The Late Start Program provides educational services to senior citizens to assist them in continuing as independent and contributing members of their communities. A retired person heads the program. Thirty participants are involved each semester in a ten-week non-credit program that is tuition-free with meals and transportation provided. The resources of the social services, health, governmental and recreational agencies of the college's service area contribute to the success of this program. In addition, the college's board of trustees approved a policy whereby any citizen residing in the college's service area, 65 years of age or older, could enroll in any college credit course without cost. Arrangements were also made to provide convenient bus service to the college throughout the day. Public transportation has been important in improving service to students of all ages.

As another major thrust of the CAL an extensive non-credit program was organized with emphasis on leisure time activities. Such courses as witchcraft, cake decorating, transactional analysis, and fly-fishing techniques, enrolled a substantial number in the fall of 1972. In addition, liaison with the county's Agricultural Extension

Service led to the successful offering of courses on home grounds landscaping, house plants, and care of home gardens and trees. Contact with leaders in the local women's action groups led to courses for women in history, automobile repairs and legal rights.

Supporting the concept of the CAL are college policies which encourage people to come to the college for activities unrelated to formal course offerings. A very liberal policy on the use of college facilities encourages PTA meetings, service club meetings, social clubs, special activity organizations and general tours. Pennsylvania State University maintains an extensive schedule of continuing education courses on the campus. These policies bring people to the campus who would not otherwise come. There is some evidence to suggest that a number of individuals drawn to the campus for non-instructional activities returned later to enroll in a college course.

It does no good to plan and organize an extensive program of continuing education unless these services are brought to the attention of potential users. The college had used a tabloid section distributed through area newspapers as well as smaller ads in papers and spots on the radio. As a result of careful analysis we decided to use a direct mailing approach for the fall of 1973. A comprehensive mailing list was purchased from a Philadelphia based firm and over 65,000 brochures were mailed throughout the college's service area. This mailing brought a strong response from the community with over 3,000 enrollments in the CAL compared

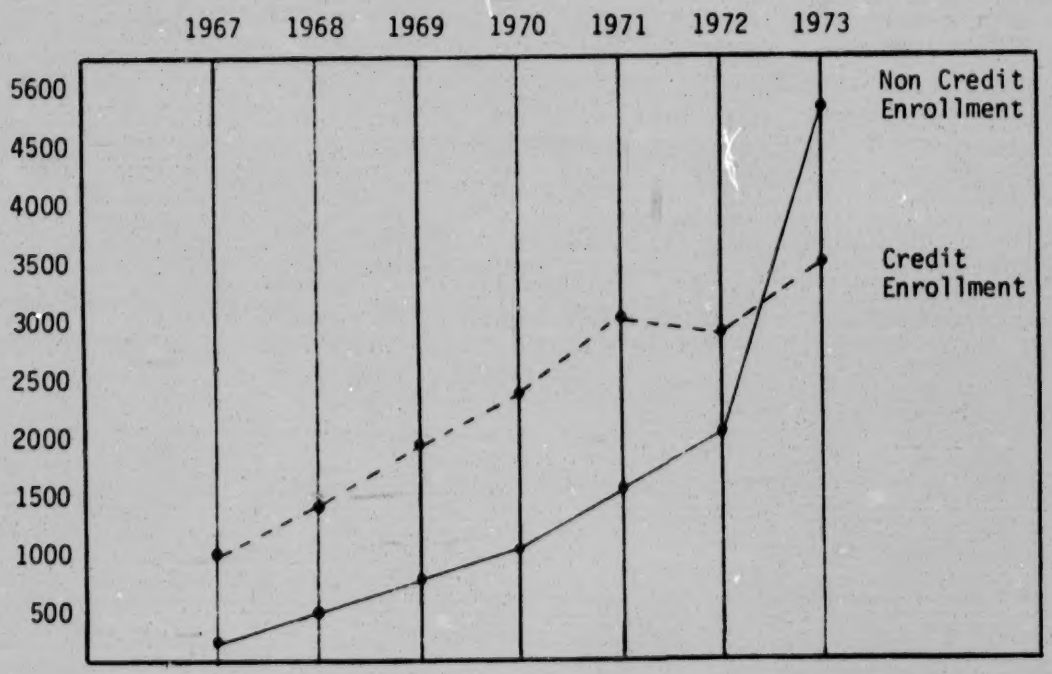
with about 900 for the preceding year. Comments from the community indicated that the combination of high interest offerings, convenient and flexible scheduling, and the mass mailing were the factors contributing to this response.

The experience of this past fall suggests that the college has successfully identified a significant group of new students who have the potential to offset the decline in full-time students enrolling in college parallel programs. The demand for continuing education for adults is growing at a rapid rate. Already more individuals are registered for evening offerings at NCACC than for day courses. This trend is likely to continue as long as we remain sensitive to the needs of our adult population for non-traditional and flexibly scheduled offerings. Table 1 provides a comparison of credit and non-credit enrollment for the past seven years. The story that is told needs no further elaboration.

TABLE 1

Growth of Non-Credit Continuing Education Enrollments

1967 - 1973



	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Credit	844	1442	1810	2465	2875	2763	3356
Non Credit	189	411	503	729	1489	1974	4753

CHAPTER 3

IMPROVING SERVICES TO REDUCE ATTRITION

During the first five years of operation NCACC had experienced a low attrition rate by open admission, community college standards averaging around thirty percent. For the fall of 1972, the attrition rate increased to fifty percent. While there were logical explanations for the increase including the decision by four year institutions to increase their emphasis on recruiting students from community colleges before they completed the associate degree, the explanations did not alter the impact of increased attrition on total enrollment. It required little analysis to conclude that if we could keep a higher percentage of the students who enrolled, fewer new students would have to be recruited.

A number of strategies were designed to reduce attrition including emphasis on the total environment with special attention to the out of class needs of students, improved supportive services for non-traditional students and the development of alternative learning strategies to individualize instruction. It is difficult to assess the impact of any single activity related to this effort because students leave school for a combination of reasons. A financial problem may be the precipitating incident, but the decision to leave results from a chain of events during which an institution simply fails to give a student enough reasons for staying. Whatever the relative contribution of the various strategies employed, the

aggregate effect was to reduce the attrition rate to the thirty percent previously experienced.

We are of course familiar with the arguments advanced by such eminent scholars as Burton Clark concerning the so-called cooling out function by which the community college presumably helps students adjust their sights to a more realistic level by discouraging them from continuing their education. We view such arguments when used to explain attrition rates as primarily rationalization for failure. Students come to a community college for a reason. Undoubtedly, there are some for whom the college is dysfunctional. It is probable, however, that this number can be reduced far below the levels considered normal by most community colleges through intensive and personal effort designed to meet individual needs.

Basic Education Services

An attrition study showed that approximately 42% of the students who leave NCACC do so because of academic reasons. In an attempt to decrease the number of students with academic problems, a formal tutoring program was instituted. (Previously, tutoring had been on a haphazard volunteer basis, with no effort made to insure that tutoring was available to every student who needed it.) In the fall of 1972 plans were made to provide tutoring services through Equal Opportunity Act funds for educationally or economically disadvantaged students, primarily members of minority groups. Through this plan 26 students were tutored with 162 hours of tutorial services provided. In spring 1973 a decision was made to broaden the base of the tutoring

service and move it into the Basic Education program of the college. Released time was granted to a faculty specialist in reading and learning disabilities to supervise the program with the help of a professional assistant. Both peer and professional tutors were used with funds coming from three sources: 1) Act 101 for educationally or economically disadvantaged students, 2) a Vocational Incentive grant for students in career-technical programs, and 3) college funds for students not qualifying under either of the other areas. In fall 1973, 72 students were tutored with 455 hours of tutoring services provided. In the spring of 1974 the college tutoring program also began to serve as a clearinghouse for the Tutorial Assistant Program of the G.I. Bill in order to insure that qualified tutors were available to veterans and to encourage use of this service.

In a further effort to reduce attrition, a significant revision was made in the Basic Education program during the 1972-73 year. The most obvious effect of this revision was the elimination of all non-credit courses and the introduction of basic education courses carrying credit toward degrees. It had been determined that the non-credit status of basic education courses made students reluctant to enroll in them, and even more reluctant to succeed in them. Specifically, there were three areas involved in the revision: English, reading and mathematics.

The non-credit pre-English course which had been developed during the 1971-72 year for offering in the fall of 1972 was a total failure.

Only 40 students enrolled in the 220 spaces available in 11 anticipated pre-English sections. Consequently pre-English was cancelled and the students placed in "regular" English sections and given extra help as needed. At the end of the semester, these students achieved at approximately the same level as the students originally enrolled in English sections. Consequently, two English instructors developed "alternate strategies" (described later) to permit a student to work at his own rate. In fall 1973 the program was started with four sections of credit carrying "alternate strategy" English I scheduled. A total of 108 students enrolled, filling all sections.

A similar situation existed in reading. The reading program had consisted of a non-credit developmental course and reading assistance on a walk-in and referral basis. Student use of the latter had been minimal, and only four students enrolled in the developmental reading course in the fall of 1972. This course was then replaced by three courses, each designed for a different level of student: Reading Fundamentals (1 credit), Reading and Study Skills (2 credits), and Speed Reading (1 credit). These credits are applicable toward career-technical and general education degrees, although not toward the career-transfer degrees. With the commitment of the counseling staff, the improvement in reading enrollment was dramatic. In the fall of 1973, although only 3 students enrolled in Reading Fundamentals, 95 enrolled in Reading and Study Skills, and 29 in Speed Reading.

In mathematics, the five non-credit "pre-courses" were replaced with a three-credit Introduction to Mathematics course including various branches depending upon the math course for which the student was preparing. These credits are the same type as the reading ones, insofar as applicability toward degrees is concerned. A continuing effort has been made to insure that the material covered in Introduction to Mathematics is necessary for success in subsequent courses; previously difficulties had resulted from requiring students to learn things which were "good for them" but not necessarily required in the subsequent courses. In accordance with this philosophy, the materials used have been increasingly ones developed by our own staff, rather than commercial ones. The increase in enrollment in the mathematics area of basic education has been significant, increasing from 100 in the fall of 1972 to 140 in the fall of 1973.

Alternate Learning Strategies

One of the focal points of our concern was the need for individualizing instruction so that students could proceed at their own rate. The revision to the basic education program previously described made the development of such alternatives essential. We believed strongly that more students would succeed in such a program and that their success would have a significant impact on our ability to retain them as students.

The student who needs more or less time in English I enrolls in one of the "alternate strategy" sections of this course. These

sections use a highly individualized approach to writing allowing the student freedom to do much of the work on his own schedule; the instructor is available at specified times and a professional assistant is available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Communications Laboratory. Students with weak backgrounds in English are encouraged to select this approach so they may have as much time as necessary to complete the required work. In fall 1973 an English I challenge examination was initiated for the more able students; those who do not wish to take the challenge examination or who fail it by a small margin are also encouraged to enroll in "alternate strategies" so they may finish the course in less than one semester. Alternative approaches have also been introduced in various English II sections so that the student may select the type of course which best fits his or her career or academic goals. English II sections which may be selected are: a) for the student who wishes to write and read drama, short stories or novels, b) for the student who wishes to study the effect of mass media on himself and to read and write about his career field, and c) for the student who wants training and practice in the types of writing demanded in his chosen career.

Discussions on the possible causes of a continuing decrease in foreign language enrollment resulted in the identification of two problems which could be controlled: 1) the uncertainty on the part of students and advisors as to which level of language was appropriate to the students' previous preparation, 2) the scheduling problems of finding the right level at the right time. To solve these problems two different approaches were tried.

In French and German, the instructor volunteered to offer both languages at the I, II, and III level in the fall semester although this exceeded the normal faculty load. (Traditionally the II level had only been available in the spring semester.) She also developed detailed placement guidelines for the use of counselors and faculty advisors and agreed to encourage students to drop one course and add another if the original placement proved to be inappropriate.

The Spanish instructor proposed the development of a completely individualized approach to instruction in which all levels of Spanish (I through VI) would be available at all scheduled times. The student enrolled at a time which fitted his/her schedule and was subsequently placed in the appropriate level of Spanish during the first week of the semester. Extensive materials were developed and tapes prepared so that all levels of Spanish could be taught simultaneously by the instructor in the Language Lab. The student may come to class during any of the 21 hours the lab is open to receive instruction, to converse with the instructor or fellow students, to listen to instructional tapes, or to take quizzes or exams. A student assistant has been added to do some of the paperwork and a part-time professional assistant has been made available to increase the opportunities for conversation.

Of the two approaches, the individualized alternative proved the most successful. Enrollment in Spanish increased from 74 in fall 1972 to 152 in fall 1973. Attrition from fall to spring was affected even more dramatically. In spring, 1973 only 43 students continued

Spanish. In spring, 1974, 147 of the original 152 continued their study. In French and German, while the fall 1973 enrollment was 70, an increase of 11 over the preceding year, attrition for the spring semester increased with only 32 students remaining. There has been an upsurge of interest in Spanish on the part of students in career-technical fields such as nursing and dental hygiene. Previously, because of the heavy student schedules in those fields, it was virtually impossible for a student to fit the proper level of Spanish into his/her schedule. Now, because of the number of sections and and availability of all levels at the same times, these students are electing Spanish.

Significant developments have also taken place in the associate degree nursing program. Through a special project grant, Nursing I has been completely self-paced, with modules including objectives, activities, and evaluation. The individualization of Nursing I has provided the opportunity to fill vacancies which occur if a student drops from the program during the first seven weeks of the semester. In view of the fact that there are three times as many applicants as places in this program, there are always students competing for open spaces.

An area with great potential is the development of the College-at-Home Program (CAHP). Planning has been underway to provide certain basic, general, or technical education courses for the student who does not attend formal or regularly scheduled classes at the college. It is designed to facilitate the enrollment of the non-commuting

student when class attendance would be inconvenient, impossible, or undesirable. Through the use of grant funds, faculty have been working during 1973-74 on various techniques for structuring their courses for College-at-Home utilizing a variety of audio-visual resources including the telephone, cassette tapes, the mail, and television. The courses have carefully defined competencies to be mastered, tasks to be performed to attain the competencies and varied systems for evaluation.

In some cases on-campus consultation or visits may be necessary during the semester, arranged at the mutual convenience of the student and instructor. Direct mail advertising of the program is planned for spring 1974, with the program beginning in September 1974 with a limited number of course offerings. Development of additional courses will continue during 1974-75 with a goal of sufficient courses available for a complete associate degree program. It is anticipated that a total of 125 part-time students will be enrolled in CAHP courses in the fall of 1974, not including the inmates of correctional institutions. One key result of CAHP is to accelerate significantly the development of individualized instruction in a wide range of courses.

Supporting these various strategies for individualizing learning is a grading system which provides the necessary flexibility in administrative procedures while maintaining a helping rather than punitive atmosphere. Students may withdraw through the final day of final examinations without penalty. Thus they are encouraged to stay

in courses learning as much as possible even when the possibility of receiving a passing grade is slight. Some faculty members have been nervous about the possible consequences for transfer students of the system. Our most recently completed follow-up studies reveal, however, that students conform to the findings of national studies with declines in grade point averages staying well within the expected range of less than one-half a grade point. The Academic Standards Committee reviews students who accumulate more than 15 credit hours of W's and can take appropriate action. In courses where instruction has been individualized, students may take more or less than a semester to complete a course.

Peer Counseling

During the summer of 1972, a peer counseling program was developed, patterned after two existing models, Malcom X College in Chicago, and Los Angeles City College. The peer counseling program became a part of a successful college-wide proposal requesting state funds to be used to assist disadvantaged students. Students were selected for training on the basis of concern for others, the ability to relate well to students of varied cultural backgrounds, and acceptable academic records. During an intensive 50-hour session, the trainees, who represented black, Puerto Rican and white cultures, who were enrolled in six different curricula, and who included two veterans and two married students, became acquainted with the objectives of the program, were introduced to the volume of factual information, and met resource personnel of the college. The process also included training in human

relations skills, empathy, and human development as these relate to student needs. Peer counselors worked under supervision and met weekly for ongoing training throughout the semester.

Five peer counselors completed the first year's program assisting 265 disadvantaged and 210 members of the general student body. They also completed 111 faculty consultations, submitted 36 referrals to professional counselors, and received 18 referrals from faculty.

By spring of 1974 the peer counselors had assisted more than 1300 students. Peer counselors are viewed as student advocates with objectivity who serve as an important line of communication between students and the institution. Peer counselors reflect an age range of 18 to 51, a variety of cultures, interests and experiences, and have as their focus delivering counseling services directly to students of NCACC. The peer counselors perceive the program as a "psychology course in itself," "a preparation to be more sensitive to students of different cultures," "an attempt to bring the students and faculty closer to working together," "an opportunity to relieve some of the pressures from classes, rerouting energy and enabling a student to start his way through the semester."

Financial Aid and Transportation

Students who attend community colleges need financial assistance if they are to persist. In the fall of 1972, programs included Educational Opportunity Grants, National Direct Student Loans, College Work Study, Nursing Student Grants and Loans, Guaranteed Loan

Authorizations, Emergency Loan Authorizations and College Tuition Waivers. The college follows a policy of turning no student away because of a lack of funds to pay tuition and fees. Students who do not have funds at registration are given an emergency loan while their financial aid status is reviewed. If they meet income standards, the loan is cancelled and replaced by a tuition waiver. In addition to taking advantage of all state and federal programs, the institution also uses its own income to provide assistance as necessary. Financial aid to students in 1972-73 increased 16 percent over the preceding year despite the decline in total enrollment.

New services were added in 1973-74 including direct mailings of financial aid information to low income applicants, social security recipients and veterans. Other college staff members such as peer counselors, admissions and counseling personnel and other student and staff leaders were enlisted in the effort to be certain all students became aware of the aid available. A new brochure was published and a comprehensive manual defining financial aid procedures was completed. The new Basic Educational Opportunity Grants program has been given much attention this year because of its newness and its complexity. The financial aid office has become an important human resource for the total institution playing its role in addressing the total range of student needs.

The best program of academic assistance, counseling and financial aid are ineffective in preventing attrition if the student is unable to reach the campus to take advantage of them. Several actions have

been taken to address this problem. Through discussions with Transportation Authority officers, public transportation between the larger cities was rerouted so that it passes by the college. A bus shelter was provided. Free bus passes are issued to students in career programs who qualify for financial assistance. A mini-bus was acquired and serves disadvantaged students who live in areas remote from public transportation. A ride exchange service is also operated in the cafeteria.

Project Aware

Minority students in the predominantly white institution have a special need for strengthening their unique identities. With the assistance of a special grant from the Commonwealth a program has been established for minority students including a special multicultural peer counseling and tutorial service distinct from those previously described. A cultural center emphasizes black and Puerto Rican Art and interests while still serving the needs of the total student population. A special cultural week is held each year emphasizing speakers, art, an ethnic dinner and other activities intended to help the college be perceived as a receptive environment for the minority student.

Achieving an Effective Environment

In a situation where students, in some instances, travel a distance to the college and depending on their schedules must wait

several hours between classes, it is necessary to provide them with facilities and a choice of activities to enable them to utilize this time effectively. It is important also that the activities create a sense of identity with the institution so that the student has one additional reason for staying with his or her program. In planning the South Campus, consideration was given to several aspects which would contribute to the type of environment desired. Food service is available from 8:00 a.m. until 8:30 p.m., including two hot meals daily in addition to sandwiches, snacks and drinks, and is provided in a bright, informal area conducive to relaxation. The cafeteria is widely used both for food and for leisure time by staff and students. At any hour of the day, one can generally become involved in an informal "rap" session or a card game. By design there is no separate dining area for faculty so extensive interaction with students constantly takes place.

In addition to the cafeteria, there are two student lounges each planned around a different theme and emphasizing a different use of leisure time. The Student Cultural Center has soft furniture and a quiet environment. Students sleep, study or just relax. A second lounge is the center for student government and for the offices of activities. Television,meetings and the flow of student traffic ensures that those who are there are looking for opportunities to interact with their fellow students and do not expect to study or rest.

A game room provides pool, ping pong, pinball machines and a very loud juke box. The library provides a fourth alternative with

easy furniture, a wonderful view of the total campus and group or individual study facilties. The campus was designed to encourage human interaction and to provide a wide range of environments to capture and retain the commuting student. The philosophy is to provide a home away from home with activities both spontaneous and structured to assist the college in competing for the students' allegiance. Mini-concerts, films, speakers, plays, art shows and a host of other offerings are intended to give the campus a vitality and an appeal that will make the students experience more than a sequence of courses isolated from each other and from any supportive campus world. The goal is to provide a total experience.

The physical education and athletics program is viewed as an important component of this total experience. For instructional physical education, the emphasis is upon life time sports including volley ball, tennis, badminton and golf. Individualized instruction in this area now includes bowling utilizing a contract approach. Local facilities are used supplemented by slides and film strips. The student works at his own rate to achieve previously selected objectives. Skiing, horseback riding and physical fitness are under study as future options.

Approximately 45% of the student body participate each year in some form of intramural athletics. A student advisory committee for intramural programs includes volunteers who work with the Director of Intramurals and recommend the direction, organization and planning of each activity. Student officials are trained and used in all team

sports. Men's activities include touch football, wrestling, basketball, tennis, badminton, softball, volleyball, cross country run, handball and table tennis. Activities for women include powder puff football, volleyball, basketball, tennis, softball, badminton and cross country run. Co-ed intramurals include volleyball, badminton and special events.

An intercollegiate sport is started when sufficient student interest has been demonstrated. The first year of the sport is called extramural athletics. If it is successful, intercollegiate status is granted. The college is a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Community College Athletic Conference which includes nine eastern community colleges. Intercollegiate contests include soccer, men's basketball, women's basketball, wrestling, golf, baseball and tennis.

All facilities and physical education equipment including a handball court and universal gym are available to students and staff from 7:30 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on Saturday unless an organized activity precludes their use. The facilities and equipment have been used extensively and provide an opportunity for students and faculty to enjoy athletics together. Both classes and intramurals involve faculty as well as students often playing on the same teams or opposing each other in individual sports. The interaction that results represents one additional way in which students are in contact with staff.

In addition to the unstructured leisure activities and the structured physical education program, the college encourages an

extensive and varied program of co-curricular activities. Each organization plans its own budget which must be approved by the Student Association Executive Board. Activities are financed by a comprehensive fee charged to all students on a credit hour basis. Currently, there are twenty-two active student clubs and organizations with approximately 30% of the student body participating. Each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon a block of time has been reserved for activities or meetings so that students are able to participate without the hardship of returning in the evening which in many cases is not feasible.

Faculty are involved significantly in the wide range of activities available but not in the traditional faculty sponsor role. The intent of the college is to have faculty and students jointly participating in activities both enjoy whenever possible. The Equestrian Club, Skiing Club, Bicycling Club and similar groups may be led by either faculty or students and both participate on an equal basis. The theater group has a touring company bringing children's theater into the schools of the area. The essence of these and other activities is that they are formed to serve the leisure time interests of the total college community and in a number of instances the broader community. They are not activities offered by one group for the entertainment of another group. Many of the activities are closely related to instructional programs such as the Nursing Club, Ecology Club and similar groups.

Health services were moved from a renovated farm house at the far end of the campus to the South Campus to a room adjacent to the gym. Since that time, the number of students and staff utilizing the service has doubled on a monthly basis. Location alone was not the answer to the improvement of this service. Approximately 10 educational programs are offered during the year for students, staff and the community on such topics as birth control, physical fitness, mental health, and alcoholism and drugs. Outside speakers and programs are recommended by the Student Advisory Health Services Committee. A referral system has been developed with community health agencies such as the Planned Parenthood Association to provide counseling. A comprehensive emergency care system is available with the Red Cross offering a first aid course to train college personnel and other interested persons. Currently the possibility of having a part-time physician on campus is being explored.

The services of the Dental Clinic are available to staff, students and area residents for cleaning, x-rays and flouride treatments. In 1973, the college initiated an intramural practice with the Executive Director/College Dentist practicing on campus. This has been a significant asset for students enrolled in Dental Hygiene and for those in the Dental Assisting Program. The number of patients receiving treatment at the clinic has nearly doubled since 1972. The new facilities have obviously played a large part in this increase. However, a grant from the March Against Dental Disease which provides bus transportation for those who have no other means of reaching the college has also been a significant factor in increasing clinic clientele.

One of the services required by married students is child care. In the fall of 1973 a laboratory school was developed for the Child Care Curriculum. Day care services are available in the afternoon and the evening. As soon as space permits, plans have been made to offer a full range of infant and child care services to ensure that the needs of parents with young children can be met.

We believe that the question of attrition like the question of recruitment must be approached incrementally. There is no single solution to the problem which by itself is likely to have major impact. A college must identify all of the factors which cause students to terminate their education and then try to resolve as many of these as possible. Equally important, the responses which encourage a student to continue must be identified and implemented. Rationalizations for student failure, regardless of how convenient, should never be permitted to substitute for an honest effort to respond to the needs of every student who is admitted. While we cannot identify the specific responses that contribute to our outcomes, we do know that our attrition is low and our graduation rate relatively high and increasing.

CHAPTER 4

MANAGEMENT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are several prerequisites to prompt and effective response to crisis conditions. The first involves the existence of management information systems which can furnish data concerning the extent of the problem as well as predicting the consequences of choosing a particular alternative. The second is a governance system which can alert everyone to the existence of a problem and then involve them efficiently in the search for solutions. In addition, a system of evaluation is necessary to ensure that problems involving the functioning of staff or systems can be identified and resolved. Fortunately, the first two of these requirements had been developed prior to the fall of 1972 and the third evolved naturally as a consequence of trying to make the other two work more effectively together.

Impact of Management Information Systems

Very early in the development of the college it was determined that access to a computer would be essential to produce and maintain the necessary data base for decision making. A committee composed of representatives of sponsoring school districts, college staff and interested citizens recommended the acquisition of an IBM Model 360/40 computer by the college. This acquisition was accomplished in the fall of 1969.

A staff committee was appointed to determine the priority for the development of systems. The committee recommended first priority for

the student accounting and information system. Budgeting procedures, purchasing and accounting were assigned second priority. This planning led to the orderly development of these systems followed by a range of other applications including ultimately a cost estimation model.

The decrease in applications during the development of the 1972-73 budget led to the decision to require all budgetary unit directors to identify those items of cost which were not absolutely essential to the operation. Funds for items judged not critical were provided in budget estimates, but could be expended only upon authorization of the president after review of fall enrollment. The most significant areas in which holds were announced involved personnel, both instructional and administrative. As the decline in applications continued, some positions which became vacant by resignation were added to the budget items frozen.

A very large part of the increase in budgeted expenditures for 1972-73 occurred in the operation and maintenance of physical plant as a result of occupying newly completed campus facilities during the fall semester. Only the minimum number of personnel required to maintain the facilities were authorized prior to occupancy. Several positions were designated to be filled only upon authorization of the president after a review of fall enrollments. In addition, a decision was made to utilize a professional janitorial service on a contract basis to clean the buildings prior to occupancy in order to delay hiring the required custodial and maintenance personnel as long as possible.

Registration for the fall semester ended at 4 p.m. on Friday, August 25. On Saturday morning, August 26, the enrollment report was received from the computer center indicating that actual enrollment was approximately 200 full-time equivalent students less than the budgeted enrollment. A series of conferences were called to determine what steps would be taken to resolve the problems presented by the deficit of actual revenues over budgeted revenues of approximately $240,000.

The freeze on budget items which could be authorized only by the president was continued. In addition, all nonessential travel was prohibited. All positions which might become vacant were not to be filled without authorization of the president. All nonessential printing was prohibited and telephone toll calls were limited to those calls for matters which could not be handled by letter. All institutional membership renewals were required to be approved by the president. Recruiting expenses were severely curtailed. Coaches' salaries, normally funded by institutional funds, were transferred to student activities. The appropriations included in the budget for faculty loans and extended time projects were frozen. Many of these actions produced only modest savings but they were instrumental in capturing the attention of all staff members and in making them cost conscious.

The largest savings came through a decrease in the number of part-time faculty employed. The letter of agreement by which part-time faculty were employed was written so that it could be cancelled in the event of low enrollment. An intensive review of enrollment by courses

assisted by data from the computer center resulted in the elimination of 65 credit hours of low enrollment courses in less than 48 hours after the completion of registration. This was accomplished by combining sections wherever possible and by cancelling courses where enrollment was low.

In addition to decreasing expenditures, sources of additional revenues were explored. A change in billing procedures increased the revenues from sponsoring districts from $380 per student to $406 per student without exceeding the amounts budgeted. This policy has been continued and has resulted in stabilizing income from local sources regardless of enrollment fluctuations. In previous years most Vocational Education Act funds had been used for capital outlay. The priority for their use now shifted to operating expenditures.

The budget for 1972-73 was revised immediately after the close of fall registration. In mid-September computer printouts by line item were distributed to all budgetary unit directors with instruction to insert in the estimated outcome column the revised budget estimates reflecting all the adjustments made as a result of the decisions noted previously. Revenue estimates were also adjusted in the same manner. The result was a budget which reflected an excess of revenues over expenditures. This same procedure was repeated after registration for the spring semester. As a result it became apparent that some high priority expenditures previously frozen could be funded. In point of fact, when all sources of revenue and all expenditures were ultimately

reconciled, the college ended the fiscal year not with a $200,000 deficit but rather with an excess of revenues over expenditures of more than $200,000. Much of this could be attributed to a very effective program of grant applications.

Grants

The decision to serve new constituents was reflected in the process of grant solicitation as needs were identified. Prison inmates, older Americans, homemakers, the handicapped and those who did not reside within a reasonable commuting distance all emerged as potential students.

One of the first projects identified for a grant application was the Career Cooperative. The project was quickly funded through the Vocational Education Act Amendments and a coordinator hired and on duty full time by March of 1973. During the spring of 1973 several major grant applications were submitted to develop such programs as College-at-Home, the individualization of physics courses, and a renewal and expansion of the Vocational Incentive Project.

In August, the college was notified that it had one month to submit applications under the Vocational Education Act Amendments and that those projects had to operate within the 1973-74 fiscal year. The college's studies by staff of the previous year's problems and an identification of possible solutions could now be translated quickly into grant applications. Within the month, nine detailed projects were submitted: Evnironmental Studies Career Options, College-at-Home Program, Inmate Education, Career Opportunities Program, Dental

Auxiliaries Articulation, Data Processing Cooperative and Demonstration Projects, Child Care Demonstration Laboratory, and an Expanded Duty Clinic. By January of 1974, over one-half million dollars had been granted to the college for the first seven, mostly through the Vocational Education Amendments. NCACC, which ranks approximately seventh in size of the 14 community colleges in the Commonwealth, ranked second in the amount of vocational funds received during the fall of 1974.

The projects in Environmental Studies and Data Processing were initiated by faculty representing a significant change from the fall of 1972 when projects for external funding had been largely developed by administrators. Increasingly faculty have become cognizant of the significant role external funds can play in solving problems. As a result, the search for federal funds has become less of a preoccupation for a few in the administration and more an effort for the entire staff. The college now submits stronger grant applications with better defined objectives and procedures that focus on the real needs of the community.

Governance

Governance is the process through which the college has sought to develop and maintain values stressing involvement, interdependence, collegiality and professional development. We have also used governance to improve communication. We believe that students must have the ability to initiate significant change in any area of operation to make the institution more responsive to their needs. Student parity on governance structures has contributed to the credibility of their access to the decision making process while at the same time

enhancing their importance in the eyes of faculty and administrators. The approach to governance chosen by the college emphasizes shared authority and has involved avoidance of such status symbols as reserved parking or staff dining facilities in the interests of promoting staff-student interaction and in enhancing the self concepts of students.

The governance system is based on the assumption that decisions cannot be categorized as the exclusive concern of any constituency. Under certain conditions some decisions will almost always be of interest to only a single constituency. For that reason each major constituency of the college has its own organization with elected officers and a committee structure. The Faculty Association, Student Association Executive Board and College Council select representatives to the five standing committees of the college and to the College Senate. Committees function in the areas of curriculum, instructional resources, academic standards, student affairs, and cultural affairs. Membership on committees may involve a majority of faculty, a majority of students or equal representation depending on the area of responsibility. One administrator is appointed by the president to each committee. Committees select their own chairmen and all members are voting members. Committee decisions are final unless challenged by a voting member of the College Senate. Challenges are resolved by the Executive Committee of the College Senate.

While the system may sound complex its essence is simplicity. Decisions are made at the levels within the institution where the problems occur and are not forced upward for review or revision unless

they fail to solve the problem. Committee decisions are binding rather than advisory to prevent the same problem from being considered unnecessarily by a series of committees. Most of the work is done by the standing committees. While in theory a veto of a committee decision by the president could cause the issue to be considered by the College Senate and through majority vote of this body by the Board of Trustees, this has not occurred in practice. Committee decisions have not been vetoed by the president. In the three instances where committee decisions have been challenged by a College Senate member other than the president, the Executive Committee has been able to negotiate an acceptable compromise.

The College Senate has very little to do in the absence of conflict so it rarely meets except as a forum for such purposes as examining institutional priorities for the coming year or reviewing the annual college budget. In the 1973-74 year only three meetings of the four called for in the by-laws were actually held. (By-laws do permit cancellation of a meeting if there is insufficient business.)

This happy state of affairs was not the case prior to the 1973-74 year. In the fall of 1972, like many colleges, NCACC possessed a governance system that had evolved from the period of activism of the early 70's. It was too complex for the institution's needs. Two lessons emerged from the enrollment crisis. First, the college did have a governance system which worked and therefore did not need to establish any new structures to deal with this problem. Second, the governance system was needlessly complex and caused frustration because

committees were advisory to the College Senate, resulting in every decision being examined twice in committee before becoming a final recommendation to the president who still had to give his approval. By making committee decisions final, unless challenged, a tremendous amount of red tape was eliminated. At the same time the procedure became much less subject to domination by the president and, therefore, more credible in the minds of the other participants.

Both faculty and students elect a representative from among their respective ranks to meet with the Board of Trustees at both formal meetings and study sessions. Provision is made for reports by these representatives each month. This procedure ensures a continuing dialogue between board members and their institutional constituents which has proven helpful in fostering mutual trust and understanding. While the Board could conceivably be placed in the position of refereeing a difference of opinion between the president and either faculty or students, this has happened only rarely in the five years the arrangement has been in effect and has never been detrimental to the best interests of the institution.

Two main conclusions emerge about governance procedures at NCACC as a result of the period in question. First, it is very important to have a well developed governance system in which faculty and students have confidence before problems develop. The governance system became the vehicle through which the entire scope of the problem was revealed and through which institutional resources were mustered to seek and implement solutions. Second, a governance

system should be simple with decisions being made at points as close to the action as possible. To be avoided are arrangements where committees are advisory and report to other, larger committees. Finally, evaluation is important for it was through such a process that a committee of the College Senate chaired by a faculty member reached these conclusions and helped make our system more effective.

Administration

Evaluation was also important in identifying the changes necessary in the administrative structure of the college to change the direction from responding to growth to living effectively with stability. Again the need was for greater simplicity. In the fall of 1972, the college used an administrative structure involving four vice-presidents, seven deans, four division chairmen and three directors of allied health programs. The number of positions at the second echelon level combined with the number of levels contributed to problems with the administrative structure which become more acute under the stress of the enrollment decline.

By the end of the fall semester of 1972 it became apparent to many that feelings of frustration, apprehension and confusion were becoming excessive. The anxieties resulted from many things. There were the "growing pains" of a young institution which had been geared to expansion and now faced the possibility of retrenchment. The occupation and assimilation of a new physical campus added its strains on organizational structure and communications. There was also a growing awareness that functions and job descriptions were

sometimes nebulous and overlapping causing redundancy of effort or bottlenecks in decision making. Added to these concerns was the fear by some that ideas and new visions of educational services would not be planned and evaluated properly and would get lost in the bureaucracy.

As these effects became more apparent throughout the college community, steps were taken to come to grips with them. It became apparent that the solution to some of the problems would require an in depth study of the organizational structure, job functions and performances of administration. As a consequence, the President's Cabinet in April, 1973, approved a course of action in which the president would hold a series of evaluative interviews with groups at various levels within the administrative staff, as well as with students and faculty. Two observers assisted the president in these interviews, a faculty member and an administrator, for the purpose of providing accuracy and comprehensiveness in the reporting of results.

The overall plan called for summarized results to be shared with appropriate administrative staff and the faculty committee on evaluation in a confidential manner and used to provide guidelines for improved organizational and individual functioning. Further, the intent was to carry out these steps each succeeding year to evaluate the impact of actions taken and to perceive new areas of concern. The process was designed to close the loop in communications by providing direct input to the chief administrative officer from the many stratified levels of the college community.

The evaluation was carried out and produced a number of significant results. One of the dominant concerns of those interviewed was the lack of communication. It was apparent that as administrators we had not fully adjusted to the need to substitute formal procedures for the informal contacts that were used when everyone was located on the same campus. Insufficient attention was given to making certain that everyone received the same information. Mail was slow, copies of critical information were often routed but not received by an individual until too late for him to react. Because of communication problems faculty were not always aware of why actions were taken. Administrators were perceived as making some progress in clearing communication problems, but it was felt that administrators needed to spend more time out of their offices meeting people. In addition, lower echelon administrators were viewed as more facilitative than senior administrators.

Another area of concern involved the problem of determining institutionwide priorities as well as the frequency with which these priorities seemed to change. Staff did not understand the procedures through which alternatives were selected nor did they have access to the facts used as the basis for decision making. Faculty felt the need for more influence in the process of determining priorities and described administration as crisis oriented.

A third set of concerns related to organizational functioning. Procedures and bureaucratic channels were perceived as being used to

defeat faculty and students who had problems. Some administrators were viewed as wanting to be negative, isolated and non-supportive; more interested in disapproving things than in helping people find ways of getting things done. Some administrators were also perceived as lacking in human relation skills. There were questions as to whether more administration existed than was needed. It was felt that the number of administrators resulted in their spending more time in coordinating their own activities than in providing the services for which administration was established. Administrators were also criticized for using the structure to pass the buck and to cover over problems when these were identified. There was the suggestion that the capabilities of people had not always been matched to the jobs they were expected to perform and people had been allowed to continue in positions where they weren't effective. There was felt to be lack of direction for new administrators and an insufficient orientation to policies and procedures. In addition, the way in which things were being done seemed to result in too many meetings, too much paper work, and overly lengthy memos. The bureaucratization of the organization had also left administrators at the intermediate level feeling as if they had no place to go with problems.

A number of comments were made concerning what was regarded as the excessive involvement of the president in the day to day activities of the institution. The president's accessibility and the way in which he solved problems was considered to be a factor in reducing the effectiveness of the vice-presidents. The vice-presidents also felt

that they did not always have the support they needed from the president nor did they have sufficient direction and autonomy to permit proper implementation of their responsibilities.

As planned, the results of this evaluation process were distributed to appropriate staff in late spring, 1973; and through the summer increased emphasis on better communications and functional efficiency brought about changes in structure and attitudes. The key elements drawn as conclusions from the study were the need for the college to take some action based on the results obtained and for this action to result in a drawing together of faculty and administration into a closer knit and better informed team which could attack problem areas together.

As a result, an in depth study was made of the organizational structure and authority/responsibility functions resulting in the reduction of the number of vice-presidents from four to two and the drawing together of all instructional and student services under one vice-president and the financial and physical plant services under the other. The President's Cabinet was reduced in size to include only the president and vice-presidents. The College Council, which was composed of deans, division chairmen, vice-presidents, the President of the Faculty Association and the Chairman of the College Senate set about the task of improving communications through scheduled meetings to review institutional actions and proposals.

All administrative and governance organizations took seriously the distribution of agendas, minutes and activity reports to increase

communications by timely sharing of results of meetings. Soon other functional units of the college followed suit by distributing their message through brochures, bulletins and a renewed and more vigorous college newspaper. A series of communication workshops, under the supervision of an experienced consultant, were carried out with administrative and clerical staff to define, isolate and correct communication deficiencies.

During the 1973-74 year a renewed feeling of involvement and participation became apparent with a lessening of the anxiety and apprehension of the previous year. As a consequence the year has been one of the most productive and satisfying in the college's history. The process of simplification continues. For the 1974-75 year a decision has been made to use existing deans to serve as the administrative heads for the three divisions where the chairmen are returning to the teaching faculty. The effect will be to remove one entire level of administration. Decision making has been pushed downward in the organization and more is being done with less wasted effort. The number of administrators has been reduced resulting in savings but no curtailment of institutional priorities.

When the question of performing an administrative evaluation in the spring of 1974 was raised, the general consensus seemed to be that it was not necessary. For that very reason it was decided to proceed with the evaluation. If the institution were to confine its evaluation of administrators to periods of trouble, the process would inspire fear and distrust. It is important for people to feel that

evaluation can produce positive as well as negative results. The administrative and governance structures of the college as they appear after the changes indicated in the 1973 evaluation were implemented appear in Tables 2 and 3.

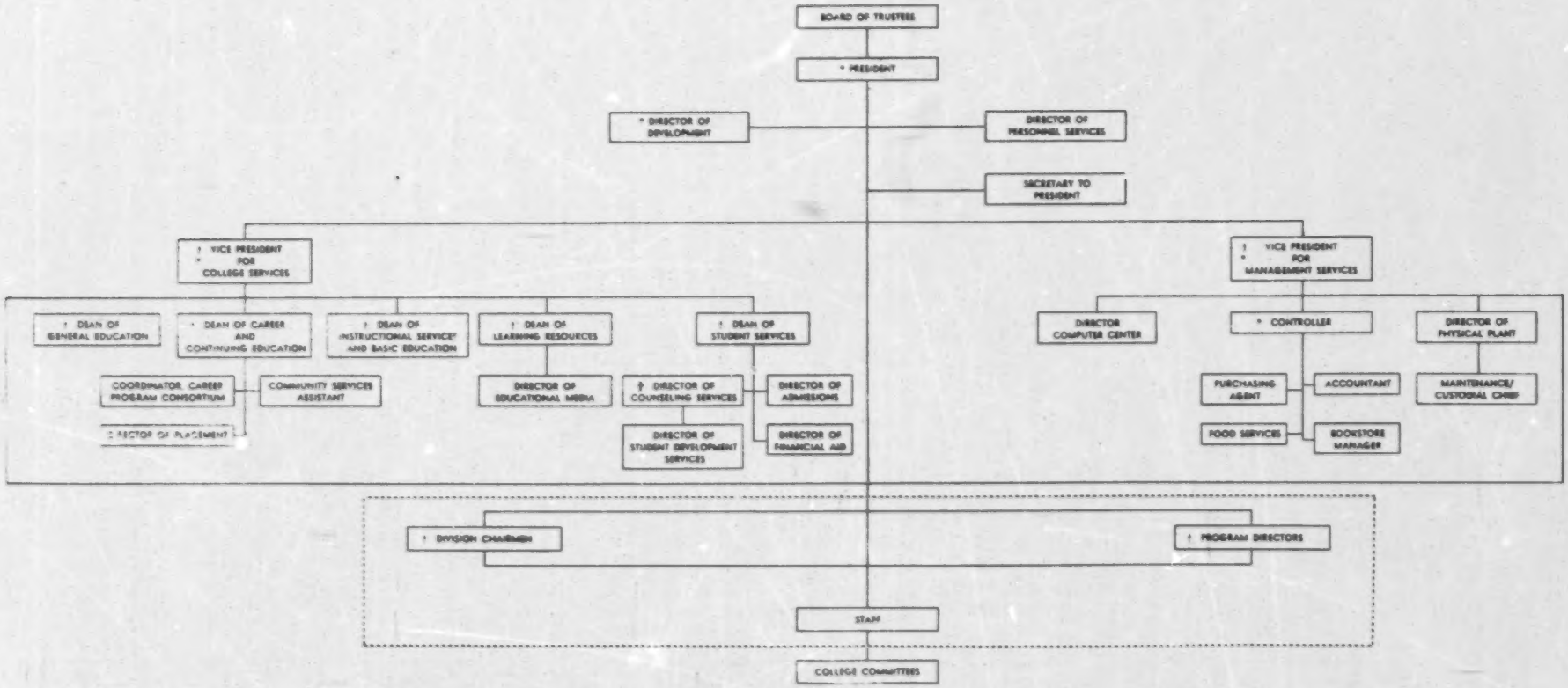
Northampton County Area Community College

-------- Lines of Communication and Policy Formulation
———— Lines of Administration and Responsibility

TABLE 2

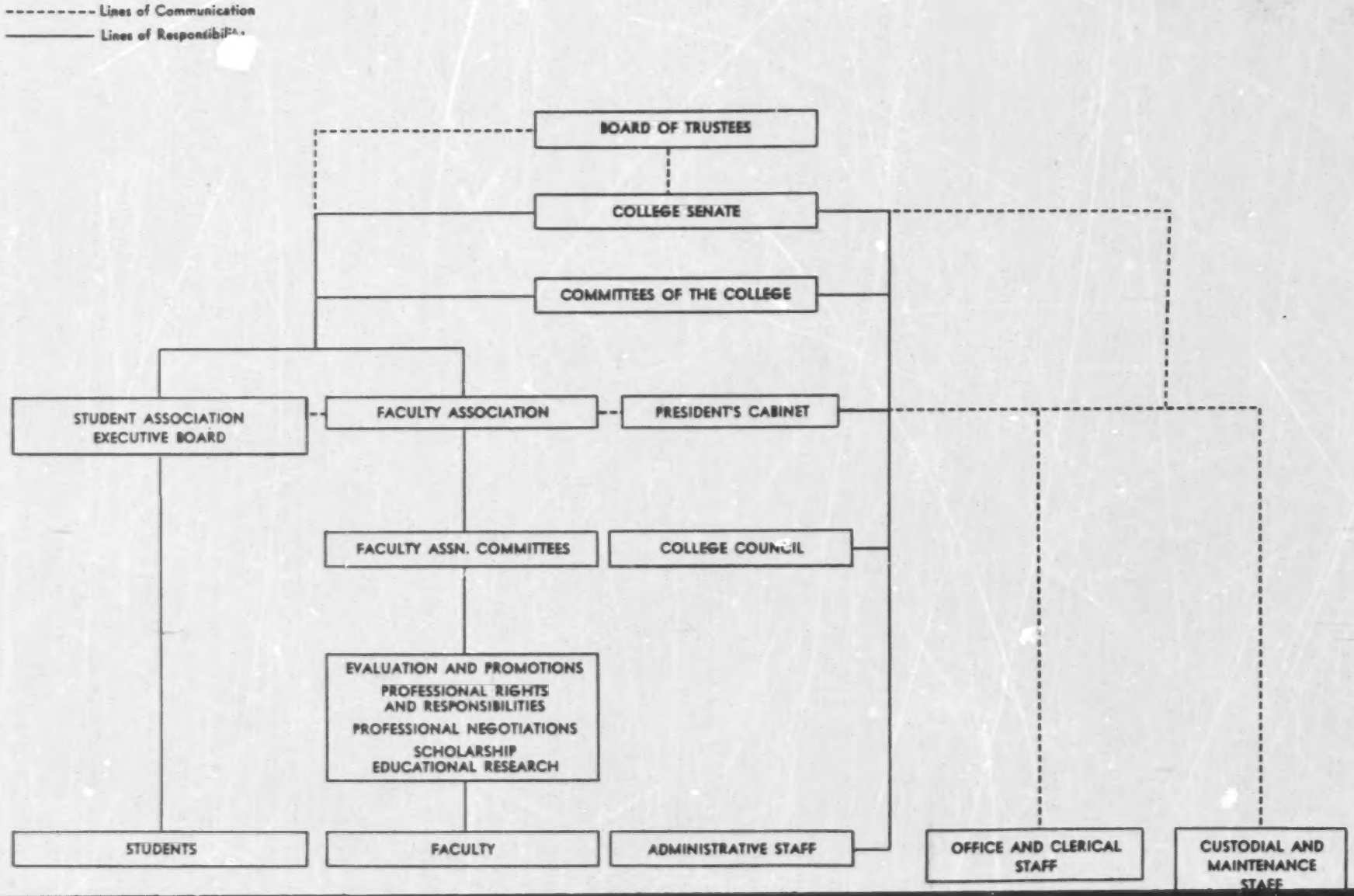
Organizational Chart – Administration

! College Council
* President's Cabinet



Organizational Chart – Governance

TABLE 3



CHAPTER 5

THE FUTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The statement of mission adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1967 placed emphasis upon equal access to higher education as an important institutional concern. Self-realization and technical competence were identified as necessary goals for the individual. To help students achieve these goals, the Board authorized a comprehensive program of instruction, open admissions, and a strong program of student services to ensure that program requirements were related to student capabilities. Finally, serving as an educational resource for the entire community as well as college age youth was advanced as an important aspect of the institution's role.

Viewed in the context of the past two years, the statement of mission bears up surprisingly well. It is clear that the changes which have occurred are changes in emphasis and priorities and not changes of mission definition. The problems of equal access to higher education in the sixties were defined in terms of the percentages of high school graduates going on to college. Community colleges were founded and flourished with the primary goal of accepting as candidates for the baccalaureate students who could not find or afford alternatives to the two year college. While NCACC was comprehensive from the date of its first classes, two-thirds of its initial clientele enrolled in baccalaureate oriented programs

and most of the remainder entered associate degree career options. Not surprisingly, for the first five years of its history the college gave only limited attention to continuing education and community service. Courses developed for full time students offered at times convenient for employed adults represented the primary approach to these service areas. Only one administrator was designated to provide leadership in continuing education and community service and he provided such leadership in whatever time remained after he discharged his primary responsibility of developing new career programs. The potential of the college as a major resource for the total community remained largely unrecognized by both the community and the college.

In the seventies the college will redefine priorities in terms of a broader range of societal concerns. In the words of Allen Pifer, the institution will become more a community service institution and less a college in the traditional sense. Recent high school graduates will continue to enter college parallel and career programs but the proportions will be reversed with two-thirds opting for career programs and only one-third entering traditional baccalaureate sequences. The number transferring to four year institutions will not, however, undergo significant alterations. This implies that career program faculty must be alert to ways in which they can encourage senior institutions to develop capstone programs and to interpret lower division requirements broadly so that those career program graduates who elect to continue

after the associate degree will find it easy to do so. At the same time the fundamental objective of a career program, to provide entry level skills, must not be altered. Faculty who teach in college parallel programs will be challenged to identify career possibilities for such offerings if they do not wish to experience a further decline in the numbers of students choosing this option.

Career and college parallel faculty alike must give careful attention to the phenomenon of the area vocational-technical school. This institution is fostering a quiet revolution in the practices of public school education. All evidence suggests a continuing and significant decline in the number of high school graduates experiencing a traditional academic or general secondary school program. The community college has had experience in developing career lattice arrangements for its own technical programs with baccalaureate institutions. That experience and the insights it provides must now be applied to area vocational-technical schools to ensure smooth articulation for those graduates of such institutions who discover in this practical approach to learning the incentive and the potential for associate degree or baccalaureate study. NCACC can become the vital linking pin between the area vocational-technical schools and the world of post-secondary education ensuring that new approaches to secondary education remain as alternatives and not dead ends. The entire history of community college-university relationships emphasizes the essential nature of this task.

While the services provided to recent high school graduates will remain as a significant function of NCACC, they will not represent a priority for development in the seventies. The concept of equal access now embraces a host of bypassed citizens whose needs extend far beyond the capabilities of even innovative career and college parallel programs. Older Americans, the physically handicapped, prisoners, the developmentally disabled, under employed women and minorities, and non-traditional students from a wide range of backgrounds represent the priorities for the seventies.

In the sixties the cut and paste curriculum was the vogue. Programs developed in one institution were transported almost intact with the assurance that they would serve similar students in the new environment equally well. This method worked because community colleges were serving only a limited range of the total population offering as one writer has suggested, middle class solutions to predominantly middle class students. The needs of the new students of the seventies will not be as easily served for they are much more diverse as a group. In addition, college responses must be coordinated with the activities of voluntary and civil service agencies which currently struggle with the problems of these individuals. In short, NCACC must change from a college oriented approach to the development of new services to a community centered approach where careful studies of needs of target populations as well as current services available replace program development based upon assumptions about what needs ought to be.

Student Planning Information

During the sixties it was common to assume that enrollment growth would continue as a more or less straight line extension of past experience until some total enrollment figure generally based on the California experience was reached. It is now evident that enrollment growth in the seventies will be based upon the perceived value of college services to new groups of students and not upon any increase in the demand for traditional programs. NCACC is an innovative institution that has been favorably received by the communities it serves. The experience of the past two years indicates that it is realistic to expect a modest continuing growth in enrollment in career programs and in continuing education and community service programs provided that the conditions identified under the discussion of these programs are fulfilled. The growth in these program areas should help to offset a lack of growth in the college parallel programs.

Part time study has always been emphasized. For employed adults who are interested primarily in technical competencies, certificate programs are structured excluding general education courses not essential. By completing an additional general education component, the graduate of a certificate program can qualify for an associate degree. The intermediate objective of the certificate is essential for the employed adult returning to school, but a significant number do elect to continue to the associate degree and beyond once their first goal has been achieved.

Substantial emphasis must be placed upon reducing attrition both among full and part-time students. Currently, the retention rate, defined as the number of second year students in a given year compared with the number of first year students in the preceding year, is high averaging approximately 70 percent. Interestingly, the second year students are drawn from a much broader base than the first year students of the preceding year. Typically our students are employed and earning most of their own expenses. They move from full-time to part-time, drop out for a year and take three years or more to complete a two year program. By recognizing this pattern and making interruptions as easy as possible to arrange, students are encouraged to persist to a certificate or degree.

In the fall of 1971, 1012 full-time students enrolled as freshmen. Two years later the college conferred 644 associate degrees. This statement is not intended to imply an actual completion rate of 64 percent for many of these degrees were conferred on students who had been enrolled longer than two years and wno had completed a significant part of their work in a part-time status. The high ratio of degrees awarded in comparison with full-time freshmen enrolled, especially in terms of the experience of most community colleges, provides further evidence of the remarkable holding powers of NCACC. It also offers evidence of the need for community colleges to structure degree requirements and academic practices in terms of the needs of the students they serve rather than imitating the

practices of traditional institutions serving younger populations of predominantly resident students. The Associate in General Education, a degree which is growing rapidly in popularity recognizes the need of non-traditional students for greater freedom from the distribution requirements of more traditional degrees.

It is also interesting to note that the number of degrees awarded in college parallel programs (A.A. and A.S.) increased more rapidly during the two-year period than the number awarded in career programs despite the fact that enrollment trends were just the opposite. Our conclusion is that more students of doubtful academic qualifications are enrolling in career programs and that increasingly those students who enter college parallel work are qualified to proceed to the baccalaureate. Of course, it is also true that the distinction between college parallel and career is tending to blur as more senior institutions develop capstone programs and recognize a wider range of lower division experiences as appropriate for entrance to upper division work.

In this regard, another future direction for the college emerges. In the past, enrollment limits have been established for most career programs with the overflow being channeled into liberal arts. The assumption has been that entrance into career programs should be controlled by manpower data while entrance into liberal arts should be open to everyone. Unquestionably, this philosophy has contributed to the high attrition rates experienced by many community colleges. In the absence of data suggesting that a liberal arts graduate is

at an advantage in competing for a job with a career program graduate, NCACC should make the maximum effort to provide students with access to the career program of their choice.

The college serves an area of approximately 225,000 population. Of that population slightly less than ten percent are members of minority groups with about equal distribution between blacks and Puerto Ricans. In 1973-74 about four percent of the full time enrollment came from these two groups. This compares with less than one percent in 1971-72 prior to receipt of an Equal Education Opportunity Act Grant and the development of a special program aimed at serving more minority students. The goal is to achieve a ten percent enrollment of minority students by 1984. The current trend would support that goal as realistic.

Student Services

The decade of the sixties witnessed the transformation of student services into an administrative classification separate from instructional services. The consequence of this action was to imply that teachers did no counseling and counselors did no teaching, and that instructional services and student services could be separated and delivered in isolation from each other. We now believe that this direction was in error. Effective teachers and counselors must be concerned with the whole student and the total process and must work together to create the type of environment where learning can occur. Students learn as much from informal associations, discussions, activities, lectures and cultural events as they do from formal

classes. A commuter institution must work particularly hard to be certain students have the benefit of associations that can more safely be left to chance in a residential college. The consequences of a coordinated and intensive effort to improve out of class experiences is evident in the low attrition rate experienced by the college as well as by the comments of alumni who go on to other institutions.

Counseling services are changing. Counselors have long affiliated with academic divisions, chaired or served on policy making committees, and staffed a counseling/consulting service to students, as well as to faculty and administration. The one-student one-counselor interaction, while still available for situations requiring an individual response, functions in relation to a human development concept providing instructional offerings and short term programs for faculty, students and the community.

Career counseling has been strengthened by additional staffing, and expanded by a newly established Career Development Center accessible to applicants, students, alumni, and community groups. Peer counselors have been trained and given staff support and supervision to extend counseling services to a broader range of clientele.

The activity programs have represented one important facet of the out-of-class experience for students at NCACC. Those activities which have compiled the best records for continuity and student involvement have invariably been the ones with strong faculty

leadership and involvement. The key to strengthening existing programs rests with the ability of the college to encourage faculty leadership without creating faculty domination. We have been moving cautiously toward strengthening the position of the faculty member. At the same time, continuing effort with the Student Association Executive Board and continuing support of its responsibilities for allocating activity funds should help to create an appropriate balance.

Other student services must remain responsive to the priorities of the college as these are defined and altered. The pattern of the health services in establishing a significant educational program dealing with issues such as drugs, planned parenthood. health problems and a number of other areas demonstrates a direction important for future development. The health services still maintain student and staff records, provide immunizations and handle emergencies but in addition they have become an important part of the teaching process. Placement services focus on identifying job opportunities and placing graduates and alumni, but beyond these obvious responsibilities they also offer instruction in how to write resumés, how to prepare for an interview and how to find job opportunities. The concept of individuals who either provide services or teach classes must be replaced by professionals who can use their competencies to advise, council, teach, or organize informal experiences based on student needs rather than a stereotyped job description. Equally, emphasis must be given to making these services available to the total community rather than reserving them for those enrolled as students.

Staff Development

The individuals who will determine the future of this institution are already members of the staff. NCACC has established its own identity as an institution where people matter more than disciplines and where the formal dichotemy of curriculum and extra-curriculum has been replaced by the expectation of learning and human development growing from a total experience. Administrators and faculty are not adversaries nor are they superiors and subordinates. The rigid assumptions of the bureaucratic organization have been replaced by a participative environment where decisions are made at points where the most expertise is available. While decisions may be challenged, the normal response is respect for the professional judgment of colleagues. Minimum standards may exist but they are not defined. The expectation is that each staff member will contribute to the extent of his abilities which are not fixed but rather can be increased by a supportive environment which rewards learning and initiative.

When an individual lives with this environment for a period of time, one of two outcomes tends to occur. Either he plugs into the developing community or he selects himself out. Expectations of peers are a more powerful motivating influence than administrative directives or close supervision regardless of how skillfully applied. The individuals who seem to have the least amount of difficulty in responding to the demands of leadership at NCACC are those who have been a part of the college for a period of time. Most of the

leadership for the future of this institution is already present and developing the skills that will be required.

NCACC consciously pursued a policy of employing less experienced staff members after the initial nucleus was formed except where special circumstances such as the establishment of a new career program dictated otherwise. This was done for two reasons: it was less expensive, of course, but equally important we obtained individuals whose attitudes had not been fully shaped in an environment different from the one we were trying to create. The college does not use a quota system in determining the number that can be promoted. Promotions, however, are competitive with declared vacancies for associate professor and professor normally limited to half of the number in the zone of consideration. In addition, candidates must document in their promotion applications the extent to which their careers support the priorities of the college in such areas as community service, service on college committees, contributions to the out-of-class lives of students, and professional development in addition to excellent teaching. Neither promotions nor salary increments are based on the achievement of additional graduate credits or advanced degrees. Continuing professional development is encouraged by a faculty aid plan which pays living expenses and tuition for approved experiences. Professional development may take a variety of forms other than formal graduate study and can be tailored to the needs of each individual staff member.

We believe that our future needs for staff development can best be met through a formal management training program for administrators based on the concepts of organizational development. Such a program will be initiated in the fall of 1974. Faculty development will occur as a consequence of administrators using human relations skills and emphasizing multi-directional accountability through the governance structure of the college. Faculty development beyond that stimulated by effective administrative leadership and extensive involvement in the decision making process will be fostered by special workshops organized by faculty members themselves, by attendance at selected professional meetings and by such other individual or group activities as may be generated within a college where the expectation is that everyone will continue to learn. The institution will support these activities through making available discretionary funds for travel, consultants and conferences.

Tenure is not an issue because the college extends the same degree of security to all staff members. Regardless of length of service, any staff member may be terminated for unsatisfactory performance of duties provided proper notification of the problem is given and assistance in correcting it rendered. By the same token no staff member may be removed without written statement of cause and an opportunity for due process. The effect of this policy, developed with joint faculty and administrative participation, is to revise the traditional concept of tenure in such a way as to

increase the security of new staff members at the expense of stating clearly to the more experienced that everyone's job is a function of continuing to contribute effectively to the institution. To date the policy has proven satisfactory both to faculty and administration.

Our stress on participative involvement should not lead to the conclusion that the need for conflict resolution has been overlooked. The procedures of collective bargaining are followed to the letter in determining salary increases and fringe benefits. The process here is clearly adversarial at times but it lacks the intensity of a union affiliated with an external agency. This approach has the further advantage of limiting the adversarial relationship to those issues where it cannot be avoided. While it is impossible to say how long this approach can be maintained, it is not at present a problem and there appears to be little interest in changing the arrangement.

We believe that staff development occurs more as a result of the arrangements we have developed for solving our problems cooperatively than because of any formal programs or policies. The key to our system is mutual respect and confidence. The policies, administrative organization and governance structures are simply means through which we communicate and share our concerns thereby maintaining the level of trust necessary to project our values and ideals into the future.

Conclusion

In retrospect one significant point emerges. The problem we started out to solve has been corrected. In the 1973-74 college year, enrollment increased by more than 200 full time equivalent students. As of July 1974, applications are running more than thirty percent ahead of the preceding year indicating that we have more than met our enrollment objectives. During the two year period only one faculty position was lost and that was due to a program termination. In both 1973 and 1974, operating revenues exceeded expenditures by $200,000 each year in a total budget of approximately 4 million so the financial position of the college is stable and solvent. Not only were we able to meet all obligations with very modest increases for the local sponsor (average less than $30,000 each year) but during the same period we were able to arrange for the financing of an addition to our technology laboratories.

Less easy to describe with facts is the transition that has taken place in staff attitudes and capabilities. In the fall of 1972 before the completion of registration we were predominantly a transfer institution with the conviction that most of the hard work and improvisation was behind us. We had occupied our permanent campus and had experienced five years of growth by doing more of what we initially had set out to do.

Today we are leaner both from an administrative and a faculty point of view but we have lost none of our ability to respond

quickly or to pursue new direction. We are now predominantly vocational-technical and the transition was accomplished through normal attrition. We are wiser for we no longer believe that we have reached or will reach in the immediate future the point where we can rest on our laurels. Developments beyond our control threatened our future once and could easily do so again. Our answer to these circumstances is to maintain our integrity as an institution, our faith in each other and in our community and finally our preparedness to analyze quickly whatever forces may confront us.

Complex problems require complex solutions. No single answer emerges to the conditions we faced in 1972 and will face throughout the remainder of this decade. A combination of fiscal control, more effective recruiting, improved academic and student services and new programs for new clientele have helped us remain a strong and viable institution. We continue to plan as carefully as possible using the best data available. We do so, however, with the conviction that predictions at this point in the history of community college education are less certain than at any time in the past two decades. Our planning involves contingencies and our controls insure a margin for error. Our plans can be changed quickly if the premises on which they were based shift. We will retain this posture in the years that lie ahead.

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